

Whisker and other hair trimming

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 An abbreviated version of this protocol was published in eLIFE in Feb 2019

Coding of whisker motion across the mouse face

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Detailed protocol

1. Anesthetize mouse under isoflurane and maintain at 1.5% V/V O₂.
2. Apply eye ointment to protect eyes.
3. Place mouse on heating pad with trimming area facing up and nose near isoflurane cone.
4. Prop up head to comfortable height with a folded tissue pillow.
5. Whisker and other hair trimming. *To preserve hairy skin and whisker afferent function, follicles must be intact. Do not use chemical hair removal. Avoid plucking any hairs.
 - a. Whisker trimming:
 - i. Using sharp surgical scissors, trim each undesired whisker to minimal length by cutting near the base.
 - b. Non-mystacial whisker trimming:
 - i. Using surgical scissors or iris scissors and forceps, trim undesired microvibrissae and non-mystacial vibrissae by cutting near the base.
 - c. Non-whisker hair trimming:
 - i. Hold fine forceps in non-dominant hand and sharp iris scissors in dominant hand.
 - ii. Use forceps to hold a clump of hair and cut hair proximal to the forceps with scissors. Take care to avoid inadvertently cutting skin or desired vibrissae.
 - iii. Repeat this trimming process, working from the caudal end of the face by the ear toward the nose, until all facial hair is trimmed close to the skin.
6. Allow mouse to recover from anesthesia for at least one hour.
7. Allow time for mouse self-grooming to clear any trace of eye ointment and hair trimmings.
8. On subsequent days, maintain close shave by trimming hair growth by repeating steps above.

How to cite: (Readers should cite both the Bio-protocol preprint and the original research article where this protocol was used)

1. Severson, K. and O'Connor, D. H. (2021). Whisker and other hair trimming. Bio-protocol Preprint. bio-protocol.org/prep1048.
2. Severson, K. S., Xu, D., Yang, H. and O'Connor, D. H. (2019). Coding of whisker motion across the mouse face. eLIFE. DOI: [10.7554/eLife.41535](https://doi.org/10.7554/eLife.41535)

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